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ABSTRACT

A revolution in American management is underway, based on theory, research, and hard fact, whose goal is to improve the productivity of our organizations, especially in the private sector, that must compete with other organizations here and abroad. The factor that empowers the work force and ultimately determines which organizations succeed or fail is leadership. Recent investigations of leadership have disclosed six characteristics of leaders: (1) long-term thinking; (2) awareness of relationship of part to whole; (3) emphasis on intangibles, such as vision, values, and motivation; (4) outstanding management skills; (5) excellent communications skills; and (6) focus on organizational renewal. In schools, which are more complex organizations, leadership involves management of attention, meaning, trust, and selves. Such leadership is evident when people feel significant, learning and competence matter, people are part of a community, and work is exciting. To be successful in the information age, schools must reorganize to provide flexibility, creativity, and innovation. This involves a shift from a hierarchical system to a model that emphasizes process and involvement of those affected, but where the leader still sets the agenda and inspires others to work together in pursuit of common objectives. (TE)

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Managing vs. Leading Our Schools

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A revolution in American management is underway. Managers at every level, in every kind of organization can join in this revolution and sustain their successes. To do so requires that we rethink the tried, and, as it turns out, not so true management principles that often served our institutions poorly.

This revolution is based on theory, research and hard fact. It's goal is to improve the productivity of our organizations, especially those in the private sector that must compete with other organizations here and abroad. Improved productivity is essential to the U.S. economy as we encounter new and increased competition from Japan, West Germany and third world nations such as Korea and Taiwan.

Warren Bennis from the School of Business Administration at the University of California has done considerable research on the subject of productivity. His research involved interviewing 60 corporate and 30 public sector leaders. The group was very diverse and ranged from shy, quiet and introverted to outgoing, outspoken and charismatic. Yet they all shared areas of competence despite sharp personality differences. All agreed that there is in the U.S. today a productivity and a more subtle commitment gap. There is a reluctance to commit to one's work or employer.

Another survey by the Public Agenda stated that less than 1 out of 4 job holders (23%) in the U.S. say they are working at full potential. Nearly half said they do not put much effort into their jobs above what is required. The overwhelming majority (75%) said they could be significantly more effective on their jobs than they are now. And nearly 6 in 10 working Americans believe that "most people do not work as hard as they used to."

A third study, done at the University of Michigan, concluded that the gap is widening considerably between the number of hours workers spend on productive labor.

This increasing commitment gap has led Bennis to ask this central question:

"How can we empower the work force and reap the harvest of human effort?"

According to Bennis, "The factor that empowers the work force and ultimately determines which organizations succeed or fail is the leadership of those organizations. When strategies, processes or cultures change, the key to improvement remains leadership.

True leaders in contrast to good managers affect the culture; they are the social architects of their organizations and they create and maintain values.

Some writers have made attempts to draw fine distinctions between "leaders" and "managers." John Gardner notes that when this is done, "leaders generally end up looking like a cross between Napoleon and the Pied Piper, and managers like unimaginative clods." Yet leaders are measured by results: their ability to translate their vision of excellence into reality. As a result, with some few exceptions, strong leaders are strong managers.

There are dozens of books that explain the specific responsibilities of managers in detail. However, there are three generally accepted areas of management that involve an exercise of leadership. They are:

* Setting priorities.
* Keeping the system functioning.
* Setting agendas and making decisions.

According to Field Marshall Montgomery, "A leader must have infectious optimism." He continues: "The final test of a leader is the feeling you have when you leave his presence. Have you a feeling of uplift and confidence?"

Casey Stengel, former Manager of the New York Yankees once said, "Managing is getting paid for homeruns someone else hits."

I like the statement: "Leaders are educators that trust every person as a full-fledged team member for reasons of performance as well as humanity." Doing this, however, means acting on a deep-down belief in potential of every person to contribute. It means giving people a chance to experiment a bit and to learn the difference between mistakes and disaster. This process, however, only works when it is characterized by accountability and unwaivering support.

Arthur M. Schlisinger, Jr. says, "The very concept of leadership implies the proposition that individuals <u>can</u> make a difference.

In the past several years, a number of management experts have examined the qualities and characteristics of leadership. In particular, these experts agree that there is no <u>single</u> model for effective leadership. Leaders, as Bennis discovered, have styles that range from flamboyant to self-effacing, from coldly analytical to boldly visionary. Martin Luther King, Casey Stengel, Dwight Eisenhower, and Mahatmi Gandi could hardly be more different in style. Yet each was an effective leader.

John Gardner, former U.S. Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare and Director of a Leadership Studies program identified <u>six</u> special characteristics of leaders. They:

* Think longer term - beyond today's problems, beyond this year's budget or schedule, beyond the horizon.

* Look beyond the unit they are heading and grasp its relationship to larger realities - the larger organization of which they are part issues external to the organization, global trends.

* Put heavy emphasis on the intangibles of vision, values and motivation; and they understand intuitively the non-rational and unconscious elements in the leader-constituent interaction.

* Are outstanding managers and have the ability to set priorities and share them with their constituencies.

* Have the necessary communications skills to cope with the conflicting requirements of multiple constituencies.

* Think in terms of renewal for the organization and its people.

In an interview at the Harvard Business School, Red Aurabach of the Boston Celtics was called a true leader. He bases his leadership style on the values of loyalty, pride, teamwork and discipline. Trust and a feeling of family are stressed throughout the organization, according to the article.

A University of Texas study of Superintendents complied 52 skills in their order of importance that were identified by respondents. "Using a broad array of leadership skills" was listed as most important for effective performance as a Superintendent of Schools.

In his book, The High School, Ernie Boyer notes: "If the goals we set forth in this report are to be accomplished, strong leadership will be needed." And the National Governor's Association report, Time for Results—The Governor's 1991 Report on Education states, "that school leadership will be the key ingredient in planning for the future."

Assuming that we agree on the need for leadership in our schools, we might want to think about a response to the question: What is a leader?

Leaders are people who do the right thing; managers are people who do things right. Both roles are crucial but they differ profoundly. Unfortunately, there are examples of people in top education positions doing the wrong thing well.

In too many schools and districts, teachers are underled and overmanaged. In these settings, too much attention is paid to doing things right and too little to doing the right thing. Examples are elementary schools without kindergarten classes and middle schools that group students by ability.

Schools are complex organizations. They are more complex than most other organizations because of the multiple expectations laid upon them and because of the crucial place they they have in our society. They struggle to reconcile many competing and other contradictory forces.

It is also clear that the management of schools is becoming more difficult. Societal change is acclerating—technologically, culturally and structurally. How to respond to those demands which are accelerating the pressures on school policy makers and administrators and how to manage the changes that are facing us form the major and increasing challenges for school leaders.

How can we go about making the necessary changes in our schools and districts and survive the pressures that are inevitable? There is no magic formula for success but we do need to understand that strong leaders create strong schools; weak leaders create weak schools.

And strong leaders in government, the private sector and the public domain have some common themes that guide their thinking and action today.

In Search of Excellence, Peters and Watterman say that schools, just like others organizations, need to:

* define their roles and their specific contributions
* deal with individuals and groups
* run the organization
* face the future.

In the Bennis study of successful leaders, he concluded that every member of the group had to some extent four competencies.

1. Management of Attention.
2. Management of Meaning.
3. Management of Trust.
4. Management of Self.

ATTENTION - the most important and apparent trait is the ability to draw others to them, not because they have a vision, a dream, a set of intentions, an agenda, a frame of reference but because they communicate an extraordinary focus of commitment which attracts people to them. This focus brings others to a place they have not been before.

MEANING - To make dreams apparent to others, and to align people with them, leaders must communicate their vision. The more complex the organization, the more critical is this ability. Effective leaders can communicate ideas through several layers even through the jamming signals of special interest groups or opponents. However it is done, leaders get people to understand and support their goals in a variety of ways.

TRUST - Trust is essential to all organizations. The main determinant of trust is reliability. What some call consistency. Knowing what your boss stands for, where he is coming from are important contributors to trust. A recent study showed people would much rather follow individuals they can count on, even when they disagree with their viewpoint, than people they agree with but who shift positions frequently.

SELF - Knowing one's skills and deploying them efficiently. Management of self is critical, without it, leaders can do more harm than good. Like incompetent doctors, incompetent managers can make life worse, make people sicker and less vital. Leaders know themselves; they know their strengths and they nurture them. They concentrate on winning, not losing.

When leadership is evident in an organization, it can be felt in many ways. It gives pace and energy to the work and empowers the work force. Empowerment is the collective affect of leadership. It is evident in these ways:

1. People feel significant. Everyone feels that he or she makes a difference to the success of the organization. Employees that are empowered feel that what they do has meaning and significance.

2. Learning and competence matter. Leaders value learning and mastery, and so do the people who work for leaders. Leaders make it clear that there is no failure, only mistakes that give us feedback and tell us what to do next.

3. People are part of a community. Where there is leadership, there is a team, a family, a unity. Even people who do not especially like each other feel the sense of community when it is present.

4. Working is exciting - Where there are leaders, work is stimulating, challenging, fascinating, and fun. An essential ingredient in organizational leadership in pulling rather than pushing people towards a goal. A pull style of influence attracts and energizes people to enroll in an exciting vision of the future. It motivates through identification rather than through rewards and punishments. Leaders activate and embody the ideals toward which the organization strives.

A recent survey of teachers about their role in decision-making illustrates the "pull" vs. "push" approach to leadership. Done by the Carnegie Foundation, it supports the often repeated lament by teachers that they feel left out of major decisions in their schools.

Carnegie Foundation Survey of Teachers - 1987
Teachers' Role in Decision-Making

	Urban	Other Schools
Setting goals	17%	6%
Selecting course content	29%	14%
Selecting textbooks and materials	36%	12%

This may be the reason why there has been little school base reform progress made in the schools during the past eight years. Most reform has come from State Boards of Education, local school boards and administrators. True reform and renewal, according to John Goodlad and Peter Drucker must begin with the strengths of each school—the teachers. They must be cultivated by and with principals to enable them to deal with their own problems, to make their own decisions if they are to be self-renewing. This cultivation and decision-making requires more school -teacher and principal autonomy—and lots of trust.

In the Effective Executive, Peter Drucker writes: "Effective executives do not make a great many decisions. They concentrate on the important ones. They try to think what is strategic and generic, rather than solve problems. They try to make the few important decisions on the highest level of conceptual understanding."

IBM Chairman, John Akers speaking in England recently said that "IBM has done a lot to improve its products but he believes they still can be dramatically improved." "One way to improve their products," he said "is to decentralize and push down the level of decision making within IBM."

The consensus from a number of major education reports is that to be successful, schools must begin to decentralize its decision-making. Ironically, however, this recommendtion is coming at a time when more and more decisions are being made at the state level. It is also coming at a time when school systems are more complex than ever. Only two years ago, the National Governors Association announced that a new wave of school reform would be initiated by Governors and state officials. Today the same organization supports increased local autonomy recognizing that teachers and building administrators are the center piece of school change.

How does local school (teacher-administrator) decision-making make a difference?

1. It benefits teachers by providing greater motivation for their work. Increased teacher involvement in decision-making will attract brighter and more creative people to the profession.

2. It benefits principals by giving them the time to concentrate on their key priority: instructional leadership.

3. It benefits superintendents by allowing them to concentrate on long-range planning and communicating his/her vision to everyone outside of the schools who can help to make it a reality.

4. It benefits school board members by assuring them that all of the resources of their school district are being effectively used to benefit students.

In addition to shared decision-making, school leaders may want to consider another technique identified by a number of management experts and utilized by a number of very successful corporation leaders in the United States and Japan. It is referred to as "turning the organizational chart upside down," to make it clear that everyone in the organization—board member and C.E.O. included—has a duty to provide service to those directly served—the customers. In the case of schools—the students.

Peters and Watterman examined a number of companies in which there appeared to be "an upside down organization chart" or no chart at all. In these organizations, decisions are made from the bottom rather than from the top down. Yet most of these companies turned out to be most cohesive. The reasons, they found out, were that employees in excellent companies share a sense of vision about who they are and what they are doing.

Relating this study to Ted Sizer's work with secondary schools, leads to the conclusion: "...that the energy and morale of teachers are critical influences on the success of students." Sizer continues: "If the goals for students are clear and these are the areas they need to master for their diplomas, relevent study energy will usually be productively focused."

Goodlad believes that teachers and principals must be able to respond quickly to changing conditions. When they are responsible and have the authority to take action, local school officials are more likely to place low reading scores or high dropout rates as priority items on their agendas.

What we need, I believe, are explicitly defined expected levels of performance by students at all grade levels. These must be developed and adopted jointly by local and state authorities. Once defined and adopted, teachers, administrators and parents must work together as a team to devise ways to achieve these expected levels for each student.

School and district leaders must assist local school efforts to achieve the expected levels of performance, acting as enablers and supporters not as road-blockers and critics.

The fulcrum of school authority began to shift from local to national level with adoption of federal laws and court rulings beginning with passage of N.D.E.A., the Elementary and Secondary Act, PL 94-142, Title IX and the Lau decision. During the last five years, however, we have witnessed a consolidation of authority at the state level in almost every state as Governors, State Legislators, and Commissioners of Education have reacted to the push for education reform.

From the national perspective, consolidation of authority at the state level is seen as decentralization. From the local perspective and particularly from the point of view of classroom teachers and building principals, consolidation of authority at the state level is seen as centralization.

When state officials press local school boards to reform schools in specific ways, local administrators are forced to exercise tighter control at the central office level. Admonished for years to "do things as they are done in businesses," local educators are now being forced to do things as they are done in poor businesses, not good businesses.

Experts in business and industrial production have tended, in recent years, to emphasize the advantages of decentralization. The best managed companies have developed ways of allocating authority to lower and lower levels in order to encourage workers at every level to assume responsibility for what they do.

Decentralization seems to be more difficult to achieve in school districts. Superintendents and board members often try to assign responsibilities to subordinates rather than help them to assume responsibility for what they do.

Without decentralization, the hierarchial model with structure as its most important element is likely to prevail in schools. And structure often suppresses talent and discourages risk-taking and mutual support rather than providing opportunities for experimentation and success. As John Sculley, President of Apple recently wrote: "People who have the courage to take risks are the poeple you tend to lose against." Scully also writes: "A company today owes its employees one of the most rewarding experiences in their lifetimes, a chance to realize their quest to grow, to achieve, and to make a difference in the world."

To be successful in the Information Age and to be able to transform our schools to handle the financial, demographic and societal changes that are upon us, we must reorganize to provide flexibility, creativity and innovation in our classrooms and schools. Schools of the future will not have permanency of organization. They must loosen the bonds of leadership from a hierarchial system to a model that emphasizes process

and involvement of those affected. In such an organization, M.B.O. is replaced by trust and integrity. When managers trust others, a relationship of trust is built. It empowers both.

In such an organization, it is recognized that the leader still sets the agenda and decides what resources will go where.

Policy makers at all levels must decide whether or not they want teachers to be empowered i.e. to have an internalized locus of control. Policy makers took teacher's power away in the first place, and they are the only ones that can give it back.

According to many writers in the field of management, people who feel unempowered usually have little desire to work hard. Their energies are often mobilized to protect themselves rather than to improve the opportunities and to enhance the welfare of others around them.

Good things may be happening in your schools but if you are not helping to make them happen, you are not managing them. "Management either achieves its goals or doesn't," according to former A.T. and T. President Harold Geneen. When all is said and done, a chief executive officer and the whole management team are judged by one criterion—performance.

"The job of a leader is to unlock whatever inhibitions or fears bound people in chains of insecurity. One way to do this is to create and promote a climate of growth and opportunity, a climate in which each person wants to carry his own share, and would be driven to excel not only because the chief executive is pushing and encouraging him but because of peer pressure and pride."

You must create a vigorating, challenging creative atmosphere in your schools. Teachers must be encouraged to reach for the stars, to reach for goals that they might think are beyond them. You must want to get them to accomplish more than they think is possible.

The best way to inspire people to superior performance is to convince them by everything you do and by your everyday attitude that you are whole-heartedly supporting them. Only then will they feel free to unleash their imaginations and creative energies. If leadership is successful, it creates a momentum in the enterprise which enriches the participants with such a feeling of pride and energy that they usually do produce results which they never thought were possible. Leadership is the single most important ingredient in successful management, and those attitudes of the C.E.O. which inspire his people to stretch and to excel contribute as much as 80-90% of a company's success.

The revolution in American management is widespread and is having its impact on many corporations and governmental agencies. It is now reaching into the public school sector as a response to the need for improved performance of our products - our graduates who are not always able to be competitive with high school graduates from other nations.

How do we begin to exercise the leadership that is necessary to affect the improvement needed in our schools? The best hope, I believe, of achieving this goal is to jump in the boat, grab an oar, and start pulling along side of the other men and women. You might call this participatory leadership.

Leadership is the ability to inspire other people to work together as a team, following your lead, in order to attain a common objective. If our schools are to assist more students to become successful employees and to become active and participating citizens, we must abandon the outmoded authoritarian, hierarchial approach to administering our schools. In a recent survey conducted for Organizational Dynamics, Inc., it was found that one of the greatest barriers in a company's quest for quality is management not labor. By a 6-1 margin, executives said that managers are primarily to blame for quality shortcomings in their companies. The survey also found that 90% of the C.E.O.s believed that the biggest problem in quality improvement is in "making quality happen, not just recognizing the need for it."

If we want quality schools, we must make it happen. This institute can be the first step in this process.